

FARMINGTON CITY – CITY COUNCIL WORKSESSION MINUTES

APRIL 7, 2020

WORK SESSION

Present: Mayor Jim Talbot; City Manager Shane Pace; City Councilmembers Brett Anderson, Scott Isaacson, Shawn Beus, Amy Shumway, and Rebecca Wayment; City Recorder Holly Gadd; Finance Director Greg Davis; City Parks and Recreation Director Neil Miller; and Planning and GIS Specialist Shannon Hansell.

COVID-10 ISSUES

The work session was held to consider a Covid-19 issues and the City's response.

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor **Jim Talbot** called the work session to order at 7:00 p.m.

Mayor Jim Talbot said the world as we knew it is not the same now, as we are all going through some interesting times that we hope not to repeat again in our lifetimes. He, City Recorder **Holly Gadd**, and City Manager **Shane Pace** are all physically attending the meeting at City Hall, although they were 10 to 12 feet apart. Also, Finance Director **Greg Davis** and Planning and GIS Specialist **Shannon Hansell** were also physically attending in the audience area of City Hall. All others attended electronically. **Mayor Talbot** said this is the maiden voyage to see how public meetings can work over the Internet. He hopes to get back to business as normal as soon as possible, but in the meantime wanted to give the City Council an update of issues and concerns dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic. He has been in multiple Zoom meetings every day trying to keep informed of the evolving situation. He encouraged the City Council members to keep informed of the issues in order to keep residents updated.

City Manager **Shane Pace** presented a summary of the steps taken, and reviewed what needs to happen in the next few weeks.

Summary of what steps the City has taken

1. What is closed

The Gym, Community Center, Police and Fire Stations, playgrounds, pickleball courts, and basketball courts have been closed. **Pace** said that while communicating with the County Health Department and other cities, **Mayor Talbot** has been good at emphasizing that all the cities be consistent.

2. What is still open or partially open

At City Hall and Parks and Recreation, the doors are closed but people can call, make appointments, or drop things such as plans off. Building inspection appointment can be made, and building permits can be issued. City Staff are encouraging patrons to access Internet services first before in-person appointments are made.

3. What services are shut down

All recreation programs and arts programs, tours of police and fire buildings, Youth City Council, and some non-essential police responses (such as unlocking vehicles) have been shut down to minimize the interaction with the public. The Easter Egg Hunt has also been canceled.

4. What services continue

Services that are continuing include: essential police and fire response; weekly garbage pick-up; spring clean-up; planning and zoning; building permits and inspections; cemetery plots and burials; city park maintenance; utility billing; accounts receivable and accounts payable; budget preparation; and dissemination of information to City residents.

Pace said the spring clean-up had been completed before the pandemic hit, and it had gone well. The City had to scramble last minute this year when they found out their regular contractor had decided to stop his business. They cooperated with Robins Waste to step in this year. Planning and Zoning, building permits, and building inspections have been very busy lately. A lot of contractors and developers are trying to get things wrapped up, as they were worried that those services would be shut down by the County or the State. Building inspectors are wearing masks, asking groups to disperse before inspections are conducted, and requesting contractors make it safe for inspectors. Grave dedications are very brief with immediate family members only. Maintenance of City parks have ramped up, with recreation employees helping out, which made it necessary to have to hire only one temporary seasonal employee. Water services are not being shut off for lack of payment and no fines or penalties are being issued during the pandemic. However, utility billing will continue to accrue to be paid in full after things return to normal operations.

Finance Director **Greg Davis** is working heavily on the budget, as he has a month before bringing a tentative budget to the City Council. **Pace** said looking at revenues, it is hard to estimate the effect the pandemic has had on the City budget. Estimates put it at least at a 20 percent loss in sales tax revenue in the existing and upcoming budget. Councilwoman **Amy Shumway** asked if the City was keeping track of costs that have increased due to the pandemic, so that numbers can be reported back to measure the impact of the virus. **Pace** said he has advised all departments to do that, including reporting increased hours part-time employees have had to put in. He said he doesn't know if the State will provide municipalities with some of the federal money they are receiving. He said despite the increased costs attributable to the pandemic, the City is also saving money. In fact, the City is saving more overall than costs are increasing. However, there will be an attempt to recoup costs through federal funds.

Councilman **Scott Isaacson** asked if the City was freezing all discretionary spending. **Pace** said all City departments have been told to limit their discretionary spending. The Police Chief is not replacing two outgoing employees until at least July. There have been some increased costs associated with the virus such as gloves, face masks, and computer system upgrades necessary to run better and more efficiently. Those upgrades have made tonight's electronic meeting possible. Fuel costs have increased because instead of taking City vehicles to Public Works at the end of the day, employees are instead taking the vehicles home. This has made it so

employees are not congregating at Public Works to pick up their vehicles at the beginning of the day.

Councilwoman **Rebecca Wayment** asked if City employees—such as inspectors, those in Planning and Zoning, and those in the Water Department—are wearing protective gear if they are going in people’s homes or going in the public. She wants to make sure they are safe. **Pace** said face masks have been distributed to all departments, and building inspectors have been given gloves to change out routinely between jobs. Police and fire have very specific protocols they are following to stay safe. He said we don’t want to lose our police and fire employees to mandatory quarantines because they have been exposed to the virus, and we don’t want to lose them because of lack of personal protective equipment.

Mayor Talbot asked City Council members to be aware of the people who are out and around and be prepared to have answers for them. City employees will still be out mowing lawns and keeping the City parks up and going so residents can use them. He wants City Council members to be aware of the City’s response to the pandemic so they can inform residents. **Pace** said the worst thing the City could do right now is not maintain parks, as it would damage infrastructure and prove more expensive to retain it back to the state it was in to begin with. Because residents can’t go to gyms and they don’t feel safe walking on the streets, more and more are walking the trails in the City. **Pace** said information is being disseminated to residents through the City website, facebook and email. Using the email addresses in the utility billing system, a letter from the mayor to residents was sent to about 2,500 email addresses.

Steps taken with City employees

Pace said most non-critical employees are working from home. However, police, fire and public works employees are out in the field every day. He said it has been a priority that the main City phone lines are being answered by a live person, even if the person answering that phone is answering from home. Employees are forwarding their work phone to their cell phones and answering emails. A skeleton crew has remained at City Hall and at Parks and Recreation. Those coming to work are on staggered shifts to minimize the number of people in the building.

Any employees who are compromised by age or health issues are not at work or are responding to serious calls only. Some fire crew members are not sleeping at the station, but instead sleeping at their homes and responding from their home in a separate vehicle.

Some employees not working full shifts will be paid for full-time work, **Pace** said, because the City would like to retain employees over the next six weeks. He said it would be more expensive to do a reduction in force and try to recruit those employees back afterward. He said employees working from home are doing a good job working from home, as they respond to calls and emails immediately. He would like to show those employees some loyalty.

Pace said a policy entitled “Guidelines for Employees Associated with the Coronavirus” was developed last week, was sent out to departments, is in use, and now employees know the procedures. He said the City wants employees to be careful if they are not feeling well, avoid

coming to work if they are running a fever, seek testing if they or a family member has symptoms, stay home until symptoms go away, etc.

A Leave Request Form has been drafted for employees to request paid emergency leave and enhanced FMLA protections based on the Families First Bill. The City Attorney reviewed the form. Leaves of absence can be for personal sick leave; emergency sick leave; personal vacation; or FMLA. Sick leave is two weeks at full pay or two-thirds of regular pay if the employee is caring for a family member who has been subject to quarantine, or if the employee has a child whose school has closed. FMLA is 12 weeks at two-thirds regular pay. **Pace** said many other cities have called for a copy of Farmington's form. While the City hasn't had an employee submit a form yet, they anticipate its use in coming weeks.

Shumway asked if the City was eligible for the Paycheck Protection Plan through the federal government. **Pace** said municipalities do not qualify for that, as they will get stimulus money from the State. Councilman **Shawn Beus** said it is good to retain employees at this time, as it is a wise investment in the long run that will save future training costs.

Future actions and concerns

1. Community involvement

Since all Parks and Recreation activities have been cancelled, City Parks and Recreation Director **Neil Miller** is proposing alternate activities for City residents. He wanted the City Council's input on them. They can be run through social media to enhance social interaction and community perspective. He said the public needs some diversion while they are staying home, because people are reaching burn out. The prizes would be paid for through the Mayor's account. **Mayor Talbot** mentioned that depending on how long the quarantine lasts, there could be a regular spot in the newsletter to announce winners.

- a. Sidewalk Chalk Paintings. This has already been kicked off on social media and using a text list with numbers gleaned from recreation sports. The City gave out 78 boxes of sidewalk chalk and has had good participation. After two weeks, the Parks and Recreation Department will judge pictures of the sidewalk chalk art that are sent in to them. **Wayment** would like to see the winners highlighted somehow. **Miller** said winners could be posted on the City website, newsletter, facebook, Instagram, email, etc.
- b. Farmington Photo Contest. This would be a weekly photo contest to encourage people to document this time, have fun, and get creative. It would run as three weekly contests, followed by one grand prize contest winner on week 4. The photos must be taken during quarantine and with immediate family members, with no purchasing of props.
- c. Stay at Home Roadshow. A 10 to 15 minute video must be shot on the property where they are quarantining, with their quarantine crew, uploaded to Youtube, and judged by the Park and Recreation Staff at the end of a three to four-week period. **Mayor Talbot** liked this idea. **Shumway** said this would be a safe activity that could be done during quarantine and something she would like to do with her own family. **Wayment** agreed.
- d. Get Out and Hike. Of the City's 12 trails, they are encouraging residents to hike either Fab Five or Magnificent Seven City Trails between April 1 and May 3. Prizes will be

awarded for those who complete the challenge. **Shumway** had some corrections on the flyer **Miller** prepared, which she will provide to him. Also, she suggested that a link to the Farmington Trails website be provided for trail details and maps. **Miller** also mentioned that the Trails Committee gives out patches based on the number of miles hiked, and he would like to coordinate with them. **Mayor Talbot** asked **Shumway**, as the Council's liaison to the Trails Committee, to keep an eye on this and report back. **Wayment** thought it was a good idea to implement this during the quarantine.

- e. Farmington History Audio Car Tour. This would be a recorded audio tour to be adapted from a walking tour the Historic Preservation Commission has already produced. **Isaacson** questioned if this is a good idea because it would encourage people to leave their homes. **Shumway** said with this and the scavenger hunt, the City could emphasize the rule that participants must stay in their car even when scanning QR codes or taking pictures. **Wayment** suggested for both this and the scavenger hunt, that the City first get permission from property owners or individuals whose property this may affect. The City should encourage people to stay in their cars and not wander or impede property. She said it would be a great way to highlight hidden gems in the city that people are not aware of like Woodland Park and the cemetery. **Miller** said he would like to involve the Historical Preservation Commission. Councilman **Shawn Beus** said it would be nice to flesh it out later so that a video including an internal tour or more in depth history could be included on each historical site. **Shumway** agreed, saying a walking tour with QR codes on a plaque in front of historic homes would be a good idea.
- f. The Great Farmington Scavenger Hunt. This would be a weekly scavenger hunt on Tuesdays and Thursdays for random QR codes placed around the City. **Isaacson** also questioned if this is a good idea because it would encourage people to leave their homes. **Mayor Talbot** said other cities such as North Salt Lake and Woods Cross are doing a scavenger hunt, and perhaps Farmington could wait for feedback from those cities to see if it is worth doing, then do Farmington's after restrictions loosen in the future. **Pace** saw a concern on social media regarding an Orem scavenger hunt where residents kept showing up in someone's front yard.

2. Enforcement of County Health Order on staying home (unofficial gatherings)

Pace said that once playgrounds and basketball courts were closed, and the pickleball nets went down, there has been good cooperation with the public to comply with County Health orders. Community involvement such as the items **Miller** listed could help enhance social interaction and community perspective. However, there is still a need to continue discouraging unofficial gatherings. The Parks and Recreation Department has been patrolling parks to make sure compliance is occurring. If they see a gathering, they have been asked to disperse. If cooperation is not achieved, the Police Department is ready and willing to help out. However, the City hasn't had many situations of this.

3. Finalize an Official Disaster Declaration

After consulting with the City Attorney, **Pace** said he felt it was a good idea to have an Official Disaster Declaration requiring the mayor's signature ready to go just in case. **Mayor Talbot** has

been discussing the issue with other mayors in the county about the need to officially declare a state of emergency. It may be needed to obtain federal funds in the future. So far it has not been needed, but **Pace** wanted the City Council to read the prepared draft in case it does become necessary in the future. **Mayor Talbot** said he understood that when Davis County made their declaration, that it trickled down to all the cities.

Councilman **Beus** asked if the City should close the tennis courts. **Mayor Talbot** said they have been monitored, but he has not seen the need to shut them down yet. However, he will check with other neighboring cities to see if they have shut down their tennis courts. It would be a good idea to be consistent with neighboring sister cities.

GOVERNING BODY REPORTS:

Mayor Talbot and City Council Reports

Mayor Talbot asked City Council members to report on their committee assignments over the last four weeks. **Isaacson** said the photo of the Youth Council looked good in the newsletter, but had nothing else to report.

Shumway said the Trails Committee had canceled their meeting and social hike. She has been attending many Chamber of Commerce Zoom meetings about financial assistance for area businesses. She also asked about the landfill being closed.

She has heard that there has been a dramatic increase in the number of trucks going down Sheep Road with full trucks and then coming back with empty trucks. She wondered if the City should make a large dumpster available at City Hall. **Mayor Talbot** said this has been a health issue decided on by County Commissioner **Bob Stevenson** and Wasatch Integrated Waste for the safety of their employees. **Mayor Talbot** said he would follow up with **Stevenson**. **Pace** said he hasn't received complaints from residents yet, but probably because the City just barely finished spring clean-up. He thinks the landfill may change their stance by Friday. **Wayment** said the City should make a conscious effort to remind residents of the extra garbage day on April 18. **Shumway** added that the extra garbage day should be posted on Facebook.

Beus said he had a procedural question regarding the Historic Preservation Committee that he will email to **Pace**.

Wayment said she was disappointed that the Utah League of Cities and Towns event in St. George had been canceled, especially after all Council members had committed to attend. **Mayor Talbot** said he hoped all could attend next year, or during a fall event in Salt Lake City. He said was going to the first time in seven years that the entire Council would attend the event.

Mayor Talbot encouraged City Council members and residents to consult reliable Covid-19 data, the best of which could be found on the Davis County Health Department website. He also asked that Council members go through the **Mayor** and **Pace** with questions first before going to department heads, because they are busy handling employees at the moment.

CLOSED SESSION

Motion:

Councilman Brett Anderson made the motion to go into a closed meeting for the purpose of real estate transactions (strategy on lease options), and the character and competence of individuals. **Councilman Beus** seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Sworn Statement

I, **Jim Talbot**, Mayor of Farmington City, do hereby affirm that the items discussed in the closed meeting were as stated in the motion to go into closed session and that no other business was conducted while the council was so convened in a closed meeting.

Jim Talbot, Mayor

Motion:

Brett Anderson made a motion to reconvene to an open meeting. The motion was seconded by **Shawn Beus**, which was unanimously approved.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion:

Scott Isaacson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. **Shawn Beus** seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Holly Gadd, Recorder